Supreme Court, U.S.
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NO. 11560 APR 16 2002

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In The

Supreme Court of the United States

PABLO E. BARRIOS,

Petitioner,

vs.

THE FLORIDA BOARD OF REGENTS and JESSIE L. CAMPBELL,

Respondents.

On Petition For A Writ Of Certiorari To The United States Court Of Appeals For The Eleventh Circuit

PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI

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QUESTIONS PRESENTED FOR REVIEW

Question One: Whether a reassignment to a different job involving different hours and conditions of employment is legally sufficient to constitute an adverse employment action, although that transfer does not result in a monetary penalty to the employee, in order to permit that employee to have his claim of retaliation pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-3 heard by a jury?

Question Two: Whether a reassignment to a different job involving different hours and conditions of employment is legally sufficient to constitute an adverse employment action, although that transfer does not result in a monetary penalty to the employee, in order to permit that employee to have his First Amendment claim pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 heard by a jury?

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

QUESTION PRESENTED i

TABLE OF CONTENTS ii

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES iii

OPINION BELOW 1

BASIS FOR JURISDICTION 1

STATUTORY PROVISIONS INVOLVED 1

STATEMENT OF THE CASE 3

REASONS FOR GRANTING THE WRIT 9

CONCLUSION 12

APPENDIX

Opinion Of The Lower Appellate Court .....App. 1

Trial Court Order Adopted By The Lower Appellate Court .....App. 2

Declaration Of Plaintiff Filed As Exhibit To Plaintiff's Response To Defendant's Motion For Summary Judgment .....App. 21

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

Page

CASES

Anderson v. Liberty Lobby, Inc., 477 U.S. 242 (1986) ...5, 6

Burlington Indus., Inc., v. Ellerth, 424 U.S. 742 (1998) 8, 10, 11

Celotex Corp. v. Catrett, 477 U.S. 317 (1986) 6

Clark County Sch. Dist. v. Breeden, 532 U.S. 268 (2001) 9

Collins v. City of Harker Heights Texas, 503 U.S. 115 (1992) 10

Davis v. Town of Lake Park, Florida, 245 F.3d 1232 (11th Cir. 2001) 5, 9

Gupta v. Florida Bd. of Regents, 212 F.3d 571 (11th Cir. 2000) 5, 6

Hampton v. Borough of Tinton Falls Police Dept., 98 F.3d 107 (3d Cir. 1996) 8, 11

Local Union No. 189 v. Jewel Tea Co., 381 U.S. 676 (1965) 8, 11

Loeb v. Textron, Inc., 600 F.2d 1003 (1st Cir. 1979) 10

Merriweather v. Alabama Dept. of Pub. Safety, 17 F. Supp. 2d 1260 (M.D. Ala. 1998), *aff'd*, 199 F.3d 443 (11th Cir. 1999) 4

Mondezelewski v. Pathmark Stores, Inc., 162 F.3d 778 (3d Cir. 1998) 8

Richardson v. New York State Dept. of Corr. Serv., 180 F.3d 426 (2d Cir. 1999) 8

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES – Continued

Page

St. Mary's Honor Center v. Hicks, 509 U.S. 502 (1993) 10

Tarshis v. Riese Org., 211 F.3d 30 (2d Cir. 2000) 8

Ward Cove Packing Co., Inc. v. Atonio, 490 U.S. 642 (1989) 10

OTHER AUTHORITIES –

29 U.S.C. §§ 621-634 10

29 U.S.C. § 623(d) 11

29 U.S.C. § 2007(a) 10

38 U.S.C. § 4311(b) 10

42 U.S.C. § 1983 ..... 2, 4

42 U.S.C. § 2000e-2(a) 1, 9

42 U.S.C. § 2000e-3(a) 2

42 U.S.C. § 12203(a) 12

PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI

The petitioner, Pablo E. Barrios, petitions this Court to review the judgment and opinion of the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit in this case.

OPINION BELOW

The opinion of the lower appellate court is unpublished. That opinion is reproduced in the appendix to this petition at Appendix (hereafter App.) 1.

BASIS FOR JURISDICTION

The opinion of the lower court was filed on January 16, 2002.

This Court has jurisdiction to review the decision of a lower federal appellate court pursuant to Title 28 United States Code section 1254(1).

FEDERAL STATUTORY PROVISIONS INVOLVED

Title 42 United States Code section 2000e-2(a) provides:

> (a) **Employer practices.** It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer –
>
> (1) to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to his

compensation, terms, conditions or privileges of employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; or

(2) to limit, segregate, or classify his employees or applicants for employment in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his status as an employee, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

Title 42 United States Code section 2000e-3(a) provides:

(a) **Discrimination for making charges, testifying, assisting, or participating in enforcement proceedings.** It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer to discriminate against any of his employees or applicants for employment, for an employment agency, or joint labor-management committee controlling apprenticeship or other training or retraining, including on-the-job training programs, to discriminate against any individual, or for a labor organization to discriminate against any member thereof or applicant for membership, because he has opposed any practice made an unlawful employment practice by this title, or because he has made a charge, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under this title.

Title 42 United States Code section 1983 provides:

Every person who, under color of any statute, ordinance, regulation, custom, or usage, or any State or Territory or the District of Columbia, subjects, or

causes to be subjected, any citizen of the United States or other person within the jurisdiction thereof to the deprivation of any rights, privileges, or immunities secured by the Constitution and laws, shall be liable to the party injured in an action at law, suit in equity, or other proper proceeding for redress,. . . .
* * *

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

The petitioner, Pablo Barrios, filed an amended complaint raising several causes of action. That complaint demanded a jury trial. Plaintiff-petitioner Barrios sued two defendants. The first defendant is the Florida Board of Regents, the governing body for Florida International University (hereafter F.I.U.) – a school of the State of Florida. The second defendant, who was sued in his individual capacity, is Jesse L. Campbell. Mr. Campbell was the Director of Public Safety at the campus of Florida International University. Petitioner Barrios worked as a law enforcement officer at F.I.U. for twenty (20) years at the time that his complaint was filed. At the time of the filing of this complaint, petitioner Barrios was a lieutenant, who worked for defendant Florida Board of Regents and under the direction of defendant Campbell.

One count of the amended complaint was dismissed upon motion. All remaining counts were disposed of at the trial level by the granting of a motion for a summary judgment.

On appeal, petitioner Barrios only challenged the granting of a summary judgment on two claims. The petitioner asserted that the trial court erred in finding that petitioner Barrios was not entitled to a jury trial on

his statutory claim predicated on Title 42 United States Code section 2000e-3 – referred to as Title VII litigation[1] – that he had been the victim of illegal retaliation resulting from the fact that petitioner Barrios had previously asserted a claim of discrimination with the appropriate authorities. This claim was asserted only against his employer, defendant Florida Board of Regents. The petitioner also maintained that the trial court erred in finding that petitioner Barrios was not entitled to a jury trial on his statutory claim predicated on Title 42 United States Code section 1983 that he had been deprived of his First Amendment right to freedom of speech, as guaranteed to him under the Constitution of the United States. This second claim was directed only against defendant Campbell in his individual capacity.

The trial court disposed of these two claims on the defendants' motion for a summary judgment. The district court judge ruled that petitioner Barrios failed to present legally sufficient evidence that he, petitioner Barrios, suffered an adverse employment action as a result of the conduct of the two defendants. Ruling that the element of an adverse employment action was common to both of those counts in the complaint, App. 9, 15-16[2], the trial judge granted summary judgment, because petitioner Barrios' evidentiary showing on this element was legally

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[1] This statute is contained in Section 704 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

[2] The trial judge relied on *Merriweather v. Alabama Dept. of Pub. Safety*, 17 F. Supp. 2d 1260 at 1279 (M.D. Ala. 1998), *aff'd*, 199 F.3d 443 (11th Cir. 1999) to apply the element of an adverse employment action to a First Amendment retaliation claim.

insufficient.[3] The trial judge established the elements needed to be proved by petitioner Barrios by relying on *Gupta v. Florida Bd. of Regents*, 212 F.3d 571 at 587 (11th Cir. 2000), and then utilized the analysis contained in the Eleventh Circuit's controlling decision *Davis v. Town of Lake Park, Florida*, 245 F.3d 1232 (11th Cir. 2001) regarding the issue of what constitutes a litigable adverse employment action. App. 10-11, 12-14, 15-16. Like this case, *Davis, supra*, involved a Title VII claim by a police officer.

In the procedural context that brings this case to this Court, the factual showing, which petitioner Barrios made to establish that he suffered an adverse employment action, is indisputable.[4] In his declaration,

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[3] The trial judge asserted several strawman arguments that petitioner Barrios did not make in his response to the motion for a summary judgment regarding the issue of the sufficiency of the evidence to establish an adverse employment action. For present purposes, the trial court's discussion of its own self-generated arguments will be ignored at this time.

The district court did not find that petitioner Barrios made an insufficient showing on the element that he had been engaged in protected activity. That lowest court did not address the third stated element of this cause of action, namely whether there was sufficient evidence of a causal relationship between the protected activity and the adverse employment action, because that judge's ruling regarding the deficiency of proof on the element of an adverse employment action made the third required showing a moot issue.

[4] The defendants did not take issue with the facts contained in this declaration. Had they done so, summary judgment would have been denied on the basis that a genuine issue of material fact existed. *Anderson v. Liberty Lobby, Inc.*, 477 U.S. 242

petitioner Barrios stated: "I, Pablo Barrios, was in the investigations unit of the F.I.U. Police Department for more than ten years. That unit worked most of the time from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Persons in that unit had Saturdays and Sundays off, unless a special investigation was being conducted. Officers who work in the investigations unit work out of an office, rather than a car, and wear plain clothes. Officers in the investigations unit get more money for their clothing allowance. Officers who work in the investigations unit [ ] have as part of their job responsibility working, for example, to protect visiting dignitaries. Patrol officers deal with commoners. While in the investigations unit, I, Pablo Barrios, always had good evaluations for this work performance. * * *

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at 250 (1986). For this reason, the petition truly presents a pure question of law for this Court to resolve.

As a matter of law, the factual declaration of petitioner Barrios seeking to establish an adverse employment action must be believed and viewed in a light most favorable to the position of petitioner Barrios on the issue of whether petitioner Barrios suffered an adverse employment action. *Anderson v. Liberty Lobby, Inc.*, 477 U.S. 242 at 255 (1986).

Moreover, because of the trial court's legal ruling regarding the legal insufficiency of proof of the element of an adverse employment action, all other facts became immaterial. *Celotex Corp. v. Catrett*, 477 U.S. 317 at 322-323 (1986).

To address all of the elements required by the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit in *Gupta v. Florida Bd. of Regents*, 212 F.3d 571 at 587 (11th Cir. 2000), petitioner Barrios also relied on deposition testimony. For present purposes, all that need be considered on the legal issue raised on appeal is petitioner Barrios' declaration, which declaration was attached to the response of petitioner Barrios to the defendants' motion for a summary judgment.

This change in work assignment was a significant change, among other things, for the reasons that I, Pablo Barrios, now had to rotate shifts, had to work on weekends, had to wear a uniform, and had to patrol in a police car." App. 21-22.

The lower appellate court found those facts legally insufficient. The district court judge opined: " * * * None of these circumstances, however, even when considered collectively, constitute a serious or material change in the terms or conditions of Barrios['] employment. [Citation and parenthetical omitted.] Other than a change in some or even most of Barrios's job duties, a conclusion that does not necessarily follow from Barrios' declaration, there is no evidence that the transfer significantly affected Barrios' rank, compensation or benefits. [Citation and parenthetical omitted.] For example, there is no evidence that the transfer resulted in a demotion or required Barrios to work more hours for the same amount of pay. To the extent that Barrios asserts that his clothing allowance was actually decreased and therefore that the transfer affected his compensation, the record is devoid of any information from which a factfinder could determine the difference in the clothing allowance provided to officers in the investigation unit as opposed to the patrol unit. Consequently, Barrios has failed to demonstrate that any decrease was sufficiently substantial to constitute an adverse employment action. [Citation and parenthetical omitted]. And finally, while Barrios may have preferred to work in plain clothes rather than a uniform, out of an office rather than a patrol car, or with dignitaries rather than "commoners," Barrios has failed to point to any

authority that these inconveniences or blows to the perceived prestige of his assigned duties are sufficient to give rise to a Title VII claim. [Citation and parenthetical omitted.] For these reasons, the undersigned finds that Barrios has failed to demonstrate that he was subject to any adverse employment action in retaliation for protected conduct." App. 13-14.

Following that written opinion, petitioner Barrios filed a motion pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 59(e). In that motion, petitioner Barrios sought to alter the trial court's decision by relying on the following non-Eleventh Circuit decisions to establish that Barrios' factual allegations were legally sufficient to satisfy the element of an adverse employment action: *Burlington Indus., Inc. v. Ellerth*, 424 U.S. 742 at 761 (1998) (reassignment with significantly different responsibilities constitutes a tangible employment action); *Local Union No. 189 v. Jewel Tea Co.*, 381 U.S. 676 at 691 (1965) (particular hours of day and the particular days of the week that employee must work are subjects well within the realm of "wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment"); *Hampton v. Borough of Tinton Falls Police Dept.*, 98 F.3d 107 at 116 (3d Cir. 1996); *Mondezelewski v. Pathmark Stores, Inc.*, 162 F.3d 778 at 788 (3d Cir. 1998); *Tarshis v. Riese Org.*, 211 F.3d 30 at 38 (2d Cir. 2000); and *Richardson v. New York State Dept. of Corr. Serv.*, 180 F.3d 426 at 444 (2d Cir. 1999). The trial judge denied that motion in a tersely worded order.

On appeal, petitioner Barrios argued that the trial judge erred in granting the motion for a summary judgment on the basis that petitioner Barrios did not establish

that he suffered an adverse employment action. In addition to distinguishing the Eleventh Circuit's *Davis* opinion, petitioner Barrios relied on the above-cited opinions from outside the Eleventh Circuit.

The lower appellate court issued a simple opinion simultaneously adopting the above-quoted reasoning of the district court and affirming the order granting summary judgment in its entirety. No mention was made of the other non-Eleventh Circuit decisions supporting petitioner Barrios. App. 1.

REASONS FOR GRANTING THE WRIT

Recently, this Court decided *Clark County Sch. Dist. v. Breeden*, 532 U.S. 268 (2001). That decision involved the retaliation provision of Title VII, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-3(a). This Court addressed two elements of a retaliation claim, namely what is sufficient to satisfy the requirement of "protected activity" and what is sufficient to establish "a causal connection." However, this Court did not address the concept of an "adverse employment action." In *Breeden*, this Court only mentioned that phrase, when discussing the allegations of the complaint at issue in that case.

Title 28 United States Code section 2000e-2(a), itself, does not use the phrase "adverse employment action." That phrase is apparently treated as a judicial term of art that succinctly summarizes the words that Congress did use, namely "to fail or refuse to hire or discharge any

individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment."

This phrase was used in a majority opinion in *St. Mary's Honor Center v. Hicks*, 509 U.S. 502 at 507, 521, 523 (1993). However, there was no need to define this concept, because the plaintiff in that case had been denied a promotion and discharged. Consequently, the breadth of that phrase was not addressed. Likewise, this phrase was only used without amplification in *Collins v. City of Harker Heights Texas*, 503 U.S. 115 at 122 (1999) and *Ward Cove Packing Co., Inc. v. Atonio*, 490 U.S. 642 at 660 (1989).

Congress, itself, has only used this phrase twice in its legislation. 29 U.S.C. § 2007(a) (Employee Polygraph Protection Act of 1988); 38 U.S.C. § 4311(b).

This phrase first appeared without elaboration in a lower federal appellate court decision in the context of a discrimination claim in *Loeb v. Textron, Inc.*, 600 F.2d 1003 at 1019 n. 25 (1st Cir. 1979). There, the First Circuit addressed a claim under the Age Discrimination In Employment Act, 29 U.S.C. §§ 621-634.

In *Burlington Indus., Inc., v. Ellerth*, 524 U.S. 742 at 761 (1998) this Court observed that "[t]he concept of a tangible employment action appears in numerous cases in the Courts of Appeals discussing claims involving race, age and national origin discrimination, as well as sex discrimination. Without endorsing the specific results of those decisions, we think it prudent to import the concept of a tangible employment action for resolution of the vicarious liability issue we consider here. A tangible employment action constitutes a significant change in

employment status, such as hiring, firing, failing to promote, reassignment with significantly different responsibilities, or a decision causing a change of benefits." All of the cursory list of actions contained in *Ellerth* involve monetary loss, with the single exception of the phrase "reassignment with significantly different responsibilities."

This case raises the issue of what non-monetary actions on the part of the employer can satisfy this concept. It is submitted that Congress intended illegal retaliatory action on the part of the employer to be actionable even if the employer does not attack the employee through his pocketbook, but rather retaliates by means of pschological warfare.

The decision below directly conflicts with the decision in *Hampton v. Borough of Tinton Falls Police Dept.*, 98 F.3d 107 at 111, 115-116 (3d Cir. 1996). *Hampton* held that the involuntary transfer of a police officer from the detective bureau to the less desirable road patrol was an adverse employment action, even though neither that officer's rank nor his pay had been decreased.

This lower appellate court ruling likewise appears to conflict with this Court's conclusion under the National Labor Relations Act that "the particular hours of the day and the particular days of the week during which employees shall be required to work are subjects well within the realm of 'wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment' about which employers and unions must bargain." *Local Union No. 189 v. Jewel Tea Co.*, 381 U.S. 676 at 691 (1965).

Resolution of this Title VII issue will also apply to retaliation claims under other statutes such as 29 U.S.C. § 623(d) (Age Discrimination In Employment Act) and 42 U.S.C. § 12203(a) (Americans With Disabilities Act). Moreover, this issue will also apply to the merits of claims made pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 2000(e)-2 and other statutory causes of action in which the lower courts have made the phrase "adverse employment action" an element.

This is an issue of national importance that has yet to be addressed by this Court.

CONCLUSION

For the above stated reasons, this petition for a writ of certiorari should be granted.

Respectfully submitted,

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APPENDIX

Page

Opinion Of The Lower Appellate Court.....App. 1

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Declaration Of Plaintiff Filed As Exhibit To Plaintiff's Response To Defendant's Motion For Summary Judgment.....App. 21

[DO NOT PUBLISH]

IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE ELEVENTH CIRCUIT

No. 01-15322
Non-Argument Calendar

D.C. Docket No. 00-01995-CV-UUB

PABLO BARRIOS,

Plaintiff-Appellant,

versus

FLORIDA BOARD OF REGENTS,
JESSE L. CAMPBELL,

Defendants-Appellees.

Appeal from the United States District Court
for the Southern District of Florida

(Filed January 16, 2002)

Before HULL, WILSON and FAY, Circuit Judges.

PER CURIAM:

The judgment entered in favor of the defendants/appellees is affirmed for the reasons set forth in the **ORDER GRANTING DEFENDANTS' MOTION FOR FINAL SUMMARY JUDGMENT** issued by the district court under date of July 9, 2001.

AFFIRMED.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA
Case No. 00-1995-CIV-UNGARO-BENAGES

PABLO E. BARRIOS,
Plaintiff,

vs.

FLORIDA BOARD OF REGENTS
and JESSE L. CAMPBELL,
Defendants.
_____/

ORDER GRANTING DEFENDANTS' MOTION FOR FINAL SUMMARY JUDGMENT

(Filed Jul. 11, 2001)

THIS CAUSE is before the Court upon Defendants' Motion for final Summary Judgment, filed April 23, 2001.

THE COURT has considered the Motion, the pertinent portions of the record and is otherwise fully advised in the premises. On July 14, 200, Plaintiff Pablo F. Barrios filed the Amended Complaint asserting claims of retaliation under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, as amended, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-S *et seq.* and the Florida Civil Rights Act ("FCRA"), Fla. Stat. § 760.10 *et seq.* and national origin discrimination[1] under the FCRA against Defendant Florida Board of Regents (the "Board"). The Amended Complaint also asserts claims against Defendant Jesse L.

[1] The Amended Complaint also asserts a national origin discrimination claim under Title VII against the Board. However, this claim was dismissed as untimely by Order dated October 13, 2000.

Campbell ("Campbell") in his individual capacity, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983, for violations of the Equal Protection Clause and the First Amendment. The Board and Campbell file the instant Motion seeking summary judgment as to all of the claims. For the reasons discussed below, the Motion is granted in its entirety.

FACTS[2]

Plaintiff Pablo Barrios ("Barrios"), a Cuban American, has been employed with Florida International University ("FIU") in various positions since January 1977. Amended Joint Pretrial Stipulation ("Stipulation") at ¶5A.B. In 1980, Barrios became employed as a police officer with the Department of Public Safety at FIU and was successively promoted to his current position as Lieutenant in 1992. Deposition of Pablo Barrios ("Barrios Depo.") at 16-17. By 1992, Barrios was assigned to the investigations unit. Id. at 19, 20. However, sometime in 1996, Major Vicki Cutcliffe, then acting Director of Public Safety, contacted Barrios and advised him that he was being transferred out of investigations and to the midnight shift. Id. at 21.

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[2] Unless otherwise noted, the facts stated herein are undisputed and viewed in the light most favorable to the Plaintiff. In determining the undisputed, material facts, however, the Court notes that the Plaintiff failed to provide a statement of the material facts as to which he contends there exists a genuine issue to be tried. *See* Local Rule 7.5 (providing that under such circumstances all material facts set forth in the movant's statement will be deemed admitted).

In December 1996, Jesse L. Campbell ("Campbell") assumed the position of the Director of Public Safety at FIU. Declaration of Jesse L. Campbell ("Campbell Decl.") at ¶3. Two months later, in February 1997, Campbell returned Barrios to the investigations unit advising Barrios that he was not happy with the person who was supervising the unit and encouraging Barrios to name the people that he wanted for the unit. Barrios Depo. at 22-23. Sometime later in 1997, the captain in charge of the investigations unit left and Campbell asked Barrios to assume his duties. Id. at 24. Barrios contends that he was not paid for the additional duties but that he assumed them gladly, expecting that this would improve his chances of a formal promotion to the position. Id. at 24; Amended Complaint at ¶17.

In March 1998, the open captain position was posted and Barrios and the other applicants were interviewed by a search and screen committee. Although some concern was expressed over the fact that Barrios did not have the requisite qualifications for the lieutenant position that he was holding or the captain position for which he was applying, the committee decided to interview him. Id. at 20-21.

The applicants' qualifications and performance in various categories were scored by each of the committee members and these scores were totaled. Defendant's Statement of Undisputed Material Facts ("SUF") at ¶¶13-15. Deposition of Edward Harris ("Harris Depo.") at 9. The committee then forwarded, in no particular order, the names of the applicants with the top three scores to Campbell for his consideration: Gerda Holmes,

Jesse Scott ("Scott") and Barrios. Defendant's SUF at ¶16.[3] Campbell promoted Scott to the captain position. Id. at ¶12. Campbell explains that he promoted Scott as opposed to Barrios because he concluded that Scott had a better educational background, had better supervisory skills, and had a stronger history of community contribution. Campbell Decl. at ¶13. Campbell denies that he considered the national origin or any other protected classification of the applicants in making his decision. Id. at ¶¶12, 14-16.

On June 15, 1998,[4] Campbell received a copy of an internal grievance filed by Barrios in which Barrios asserted that Campbell's decision not to promote him was based on his national origin. Barrios contends that on that same day he reported to work and received a postdated letter advising him that a complaint had been made

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[3] Because the committee also was screening for open lieutenant positions and many of the applicants applied for both the captain and lieutenant positions, the committee actually forwarded six names to Chief Campbell. In addition to Gerda Holmes, Scott and Barrios's names, Alphonse Ianniello, Peter Canino, and Stephen Fagan's names were forwarded to Chief Campbell. Harris Depo. at 8, 9, 14. Alphonse Iannicllo and Stephen Fagan were promoted to lieutenant. Id. at 30.

[4] In his declaration, Campbell asserts that he received a copy of the grievance on June 15, 1999. The Court will assume, however, that Campbell's reference to 1999 rather than 1998 was a scrivener's error in light of the fact that Barrios's May 27, 1999 EEOC Charge of Discrimination refers to this grievance and Defendants do not appear to dispute in their memoranda in support of summary judgment that Campbell was aware of the grievance by that date.

against him by Officer Willy Perez, one of his subordinates. Barrios Depo. at 61; Exhibits 1 and 2 to Campbell Decl. Perez complained that Barrios had been harassing employees and using racially derogatory terms when referring to Campbell and other Black FIU employees. Id. About a month later, Barrios was transferred out of the investigations unit to the patrol unit. Declaration of Pablo Barrios ("Barrios Decl.").

In October 1998, after obtaining information regarding the substance of Perez's complaints during a staff inspection, Major Cutcliffe directed Lieutenant Alphonse Ianniello to commence an internal affairs investigation of Perez's complaint. Exhibit 1 to Campbell Decl. Major Cutcliffe advised Lieutenant Ianniello that the investigation was to remain confidential. Id. Lieutenant Ianniello made a finding of "not sustained," *i.e.* the allegations could not be proven or disproven. Deposition of Alphonse Ianniello at 21; Deposition of Michael Wright at 17-18.

On May 27, 1999, approximately a year after learning of Campbell's decision not to promote him to captain and filing a grievance regarding the decision and at least two months after the conclusion of the internal affairs investigation, Barrios filed a Charge of Discrimination with the EEOC alleging that the denial of the promotion was a result of national origin discrimination and that the internal affairs investigation was commenced in retaliation for his grievance.

On January 6, 2000, a second internal affairs investigation was commenced against Barrios based on complaints by Officers Matthew Morris and Angelo Barrios

that Barrios had improperly criticized another officer's handling of a suspect, in violation of a provision of the Public Safety Department's Standard Operating Procedures. Defendant's SUF at ¶¶29-30: Exhibit 5 to Campbell Decl. Major Cutcliffe conducted the investigation of this complaint and made a finding of "not sustained." Exhibit 6 to Campbell Decl. On April 12, 2000, Barrios filed a second EEOC Charge of Discrimination alleging that the second internal affairs investigation was in retaliation for his filing the May 1999 EEOC Charge of Discrimination. Barrios commenced this action one month later.

LEGAL STANDARD

Summary judgment is authorized only when the moving party meets its burden of demonstrating that "the pleadings, depositions, answers to interrogatories, and admissions on file, together with the affidavits, if any, show that there is no genuine issue as to any material fact and that the moving party is entitled to judgment as a matter of law." Fed. R. Civ. P. 56. *See Adickes v. S.H. Kress & Co.*, 398 U.S. 144, 157 (1970). The *Adickes* Court explained that when assessing whether the movant has met this burden, the court should view the evidence and all factual inferences therefrom in the light most favorable to the party opposing the motion. *See Adickes*, 398 U.S. at 157; *Poole v. Country Club of Columbus, Inc.*, 129 F.3d 551, 553 (11th Cir. 1997) (citing *Adickes*).

The party opposing the motion may not simply rest upon mere allegations or denials of the pleadings; after the moving party has met its burden of coming forward

with proof of the absence of any genuine issue of material fact, the nonmoving party must make a sufficient showing to establish the existence of an essential element to that party's case, and on which that party will bear the burden of proof at trial. *See Celotex Corp. v. Catrell,* 477 U.S. 317 (1986). *Barfield v. Brierlon,* 883 F.2d 923, 933 (11th Cir. 1989).

If the record presents factual issues, the Court must not decide them; it must deny the motion and proceed to trial. *See Environmental Defense Fund v. Marsh,* 651 F.2d 983, 991 (5th Cir. 1981). Summary judgment may be inappropriate even where the parties agree on the basic facts, but disagree about the inferences that should be drawn from these facts. *See Lighting Fixture & Elec. Supply Co. v. Continental Ins. Co.,* 420 F.2d 1211, 1213 (5th Cir. 1969). If reasonable minds might differ on the inferences arising from undisputed facts then the Court should deny summary judgment. *See Impossible Elec. Techniques, Inc. v. Wackenhut Protective Sys., Inc.,* 669 F.2d 1026, 1031 (5th Cir. 1982). *See also Anderson v. Liberty Lobby, Inc.,* 477 U.S. 242, 248 (1986) ("[T]he dispute about a material fact is 'genuine,' . . . if the evidence is such that a reasonable jury could return a verdict for the non-moving party.").

Moreover, the party opposing a motion for summary judgment need not respond to it with evidence unless and until the movant has properly supported the motion with sufficient evidence. *See Adickes,* 398 U.S. at 160. The moving party must demonstrate that the facts underlying all the relevant legal questions raised by the pleadings or otherwise are not in dispute, or else summary judgment will be denied notwithstanding that the nonmoving party has introduced no evidence whatsoever. *See Brunwick*

Corp. v. Vineberg, 370 F.2d 605, 611-12 (5th Cir. 1967). The Court must resolve all ambiguities and draw all justifiable inferences in favor of the nonmoving party. *See Anderson*, 477 U.S. at 255.

LEGAL ANALYSIS

I. Federal Claims

A. Title VII Retaliation Claim Against the Florida Board of Regents

To establish a prima facie case of retaliation under Title VII, Barrios must establish that: 1) he engaged in protected conduct; 2) he suffered an adverse employment action; and 3) a causal relationship exists between the two events. *Gupta v. Florida Bd. of Regents*, 212 F.3d 571, 586 (11th Cir. 2000). The Board argues that it is entitled to summary judgment as to Barrios's retaliation claim because even assuming Barrios engaged in protected conduct, many of the actions identified as adverse are time-barred and are not adverse as a matter of law. The Board also argues that to the extent Barrios has identified sufficiently adverse employment action, he has failed to demonstrate the requisite causal relationship.

As an initial matter, the Board concedes that Barrios's June 15, 1998 grievance regarding Campbell's decision not to promote him to captain is protected conduct. Additionally, the Court is persuaded that Barrios's May 27, 1999 and April 12, 2000 EEOC Charges of Discrimination also constitute protected conduct. The Court agrees with

the Defendants, however, that Barrios has failed to establish that any adverse employment action was taken in retaliation for this conduct.

In reaching this conclusion, the Court notes that Barrios provides little assistance in identifying the employment actions upon which he relies to press his claims. The only employment action that Barrios discusses with any specificity in his opposition memorandum is his July 1998 transfer to the patrol unit. Nonetheless, after a careful review of the record, the Court is persuaded that Barrios variously has asserted the following additional conduct as adverse employment action to which he was subjected as a result of engaging in protected conduct: 1) threats that he would lose the assistance of other officers in completing his investigative work; 2) being called "old" and a "fat ass;" 3) being subjected to inspections of his work; 4) being questioned by Campbell about his grievance; and 5) the two internal affairs investigations. However, none of these actions, viewed individually or collectively, amount to adverse action under Title VII.

As the Eleventh Circuit has explained, an employment action "must impact the 'terms conditions, or privileges' of the plaintiff's job in a real and demonstrable way" to constitute an adverse action. *Davis v. Town of Lake Park, Florida*, 245 F.3d 1232, 1239 (11th Cir. 2001). Moreover, the asserted impact cannot be speculative and must have at least a tangible adverse effect on the plaintiff's employment. *Id.* Thus, to prove an adverse employment action, a plaintiff must show a "serious and material change" in the terms or conditions of employment, and in determining whether such a showing has been made, the court must disregard the plaintiff's subjective view of the

significance and adversity of the action. *Id.* (instructing the trial court to consider whether the action would be materially adverse as viewed by a reasonable person in the circumstances). Applying these standards, only two of the actions discussed above, the two internal affairs investigations and Barrios's transfer to the patrol unit, merit much discussion regarding whether they constitute adverse action. No reasonable person could view threats of being denied assistance with one's workload (apparently never acted upon), being asked about his grievance, being called two names, or an instance of having one's work reviewed as effecting a serious or materially adverse change in the terms or conditions of employment. *Davis,* 245 F.3d at 1238 (noting that not all conduct by an employer negatively affecting an employer constitutes adverse employment action); *Gupta,* 212 F.3d at 587 (recognizing that the limitations on what is adverse conduct are consistent with the basic principle that Title VII is neither a general civility code nor a statute making actionable the ordinary tribulations of the workplace).

With respect to the two internal affairs investigations, as the Board points out, the record is devoid of any evidence that the investigations or the subsequent findings had any impact on Barrios's employment. There is no evidence that the investigations or the "not sustained" findings resulted in any tangible consequence in Barrios's compensation, benefits, rank, or job duties. *See Davis,* 245 F.3d at 1239-41 (finding that two negative job performance memoranda did not constitute adverse employment action as the record failed to demonstrate that the employee suffered any loss of pay, benefits, or promotional opportunities as a result).

As an additional matter, the Court is persuaded that no reasonable factfinder could find a causal relationship between Barrios's protected conduct and the two internal affairs investigations. The law is clear that to establish a causal connection, a plaintiff must demonstrate that the individual responsible for the alleged adverse action was aware of the protected conduct at the time he acted. (*Gupta*, 212 F.3d at 590; *Raney v. Vinson Guard Service, Inc.*, 120 F.3d 1192, 1197 (11th Cir. 1997). The record is undisputed that Officers Willy Perez, Matthew Morris, and Angelo Barrios lodged the complaints underlying the two internal affairs investigations. Moreover, Lieutenant Janniello and Major Cutcliffe conducted the investigations and made the ultimate findings of "not sustained." There is no evidence that these individuals were aware of Barrios's grievance or Charges of Discrimination and there is no evidence that the only individual specifically identified as being aware of any of the protected conduct[,] Campbell, influenced or otherwise participated in the lodging of the complaints or the consequent investigations.

With respect to Barrios's July 1998 transfer, the Court notes Barrios's declaration in which he asserts that his transfer to the patrol unit was a "significant change" because: 1) he was no longer able to work Monday through Friday, 9a.m. to 5p.m. but instead had to work rotating shifts, which included weekends; 2) he could no longer work in plain clothes but instead had to wear a uniform and work out of a patrol car rather than an office; 3) he was precluded from assignments involving protecting visiting dignitaries and instead had to work with "commoners;" and 4) officers in the investigations

unit received more money for their clothing allowance than those in the patrol unit. *See* Barrios Decl. None of these circumstances, however, even when considered collectively, constitute a serious or material change in the terms or conditions of Barrios['s] employment. *See Davis*, 245 F.3d at 1245 (noting that courts are reluctant to hold that changes in job duties amount to adverse employment action when unaccompanied by any tangible harm).

Other than a change in some or even most of Barrios's job duties, a conclusion that does not necessarily follow from Barrios's declaration, there is no evidence that the transfer significantly affected Barrios's rank, compensation or benefits. *Id.* at 1245 (explaining that in the unusual circumstance job reassignment may be so substantial and material that it does alter the terms, conditions and privileges of employment). For example, there is no evidence that the transfer resulted in a demotion or required Barrios to work more hours for the same amount of pay. To the extent Barrios asserts that his clothing allowance was actually decreased and therefore that the transfer affected his compensation, the record is devoid of any information from which a factfinder could determine the difference in the clothing allowance provided to officers in the investigations unit as opposed to the patrol unit. Consequently, Barrios has failed to demonstrate that any decrease was sufficiently substantial to constitute an adverse employment action. *See Wideman v. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.*, 141 F.3d 1453, 1456 (11th Cir. 1998) (requiring at least a threshold level of substantiality for employment action to be cognizable). And finally, while Barrios may have preferred to work in plain clothes rather than a uniform, out of an office rather than a patrol

car, or with dignitaries rather than "commoners," Barrios has failed to point to any authority that these inconveniences or blows to the perceived prestige of his assigned duties are sufficient to give rise to a Title VII claim. *Id.* at 1244 (remarking that any diminution in prestige the plaintiff may have felt as a result of his reassignment was insufficient to allow him to prevail on his Title VII claim). For these reasons, the undersigned finds that Barrios has failed to demonstrate that he was subjected to any adverse employment action in retaliation for protected conduct. Accordingly, the Board is entitled [to] summary judgment on Barrios's Title VII retaliation claim.

B. Section 1983/Equal Protection and First Amendment Claims Against Campbell

Next, Campbell argues that he is entitled to summary judgment on Barrios's claims that he violated his rights under the Equal Protection Clause and the First Amendment because Barrios has failed to establish all of the elements of the claims and because he is entitled to qualified immunity.

1. Section 1983/First Amendment Claim

To prevail on his free speech retaliation claim, Barrios must establish that: 1) his speech implicates a matter of public concern; 2) his First Amendment interests in engaging in the speech outweighed the Defendants' interest in promoting the efficient operation of FIU's Public Safety Department; and 3) his speech played a substantial part in the identified adverse employment action. *See*

Mason v. Village of El Portal, 240 F.3d 1337, 1339 (11th Cir. 2001).

With respect to the first element of the claim, the Court notes that when given an opportunity to identify the circumstances that resulted in a violation of his First Amendment rights, Barrios testified only that he was precluded from speaking to friends "and stuff like that" and speaking negatively about Campbell. *See* Barrios Depo. at 70.[5] However, to demonstrate that one has engaged in speech on a matter of public concern, the speech must relate to a matter of political or social concern to the community. *Maggio v. Sipple*, 211 F.3d 1346, 1351-52 (11th Cir. 2000). At most, Barrios's desire to speak with friends on some unspecified topic or to criticize Campbell were matters of interest purely personal to Barrios.

Nevertheless, the record does contain evidence that Barrios had complained that three Hispanic officers were not being paid adequately for the work they were performing and that Hispanics were not being promoted to the higher ranks. *See* Barrios Depo. at 73; Barrios Decl. However, the record is devoid of any evidence from which a rationale juror could infer that Barrios suffered any adverse employment action, imposed by Campbell or otherwise, in retaliation for these complaints. In this regard, the Court notes that, as with his retaliation claims, Barrios relies only on his transfer to the patrol

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[5] Specifically, Barrios testified that his comment to Officer Perez that "I wouldn't trust my son with Mr. Campbell" was converted by Perez into racially derogatory comments about Campbell. *See* Barrios Depo. at 70.

unit as the adverse employment action suffered as a result of exercising his free speech rights. Even assuming, however, that Barrios relies on this action and the other employment actions considered for purposes of analyzing his Title VII retaliation claim, this claim is similarly defective.

There can be no serious dispute that an *adverse* employment action is an essential prerequisite to a First Amendment retaliation claim. *See, e.g., Merriweather v. Alabama Dept. of Public Safety*, 17 F. Supp. 2d 1260, 1279 (M.D. Ala. 1998) (explaining that a court must determine whether employment decisions rose to the level of adverse employment actions before considering whether the plaintiff's speech played a role in any alleged retaliation). To the extent Campbell participated in any of the employment actions discussed above, *see Broddy v. Florida Dep't of Labor & Employment Sec.*, 133 F.3d 797, 801 (11th Cir. 1998) (stating that a plaintiff must establish that a supervisor personally participated in the constitutional violation underlying the § 1983 claim or a causal connection between the supervisor's actions and the violation), the Court has determined that none of the actions constitute adverse action as a matter of law. *See Merriweather*, 17 F. Supp. 2d at 1279 (finding that plaintiff failed to establish First Amendment retaliation claim where identified employment actions had been found to be insufficient for purposes of plaintiff's Title VII retaliation). Consequently, Barrios has failed to demonstrate that he was retaliated against for exercising his First Amendment rights. Accordingly, Campbell is entitled to summary judgment on this claim.

2. Section 1983/Equal Protection Claim

The Eleventh Circuit has made clear that to prevail on a § 1983 equal protection claim, a plaintiff must establish that the defendant acted with discriminatory intent. *Mencer v. Hammonds*, 134 F.3d 1066, 1070 (11th Cir. 1998); *Parks v. City of Warner Robins, Ga.*, 43 F.3d 609, 616 (11th Cir. 1995). As a related matter, the absence of proof of discriminatory intent supports a defendant's assertion of qualified immunity. *Mencer*, 134 F.3d at 1070 ("[A]n actor cannot know he is violating clearly established equal protection rights unless he harbors discriminatory intent). Consequently, in order to avoid summary judgment on this claim, Barrios must point to evidence in the record from which a reasonable jury could conclude that Campbell intended to discriminate against him. *Id.* Barrios has failed to do so. In fact, Barrios has failed to address this claim in his opposition memorandum in any respect.

In any event, the Court notes that the undisputed record evidence is that Campbell did not base his decision on the national origin of any of the three applicants who were recommended to him by the search and screen committee. *See* Campbell Decl. at ¶¶ 12, 14-16. Rather, Campbell asserts without contradiction, that he promoted Scott instead of Barrios because Scott had a better educational background, better supervisory skills, and a stronger record of contribution to the community. *See Id.* at ¶ 13. Barrios has failed to point to any evidence to undermine the bases for Campbell's decision. Moreover, the unchallenged deposition testimony of Edward Harris ("Harris"), a member of the search and screen committee, supports Campbell's assertion that Scott was more qualified.

Harris confirmed that the applicants' educational background, community service, and quality of interview were among the criteria considered in determining the appropriate applicant for the captain position. *See* Deposition of Edward Harris ("Harris Depo.") at 10. Moreover, Harris explained that although the committee ultimately decided to interview everyone who applied, including Barrios, Barrios had neither the requisite qualifications for the position he was holding nor the position for which he was applying. *See* Id. at 20-21. Rather, the strength of Barrios's scores with respect to quality of interview was the reason that Barrios ranked among the top scoring applicants and, consequently, that his name was forwarded to Campbell. No reasonable factfinder could conclude, after considering Campbell's decision in this context that Campbell decided to promote Scott instead of Barrios based on Scott's and Barrios's national origin rather than their relative qualifications. Thus, the Court finds that Campbell also is entitled to summary judgment on Barrios's § 1983/equal protection claim.

II. State Law Claims: FCRA National Origin Discrimination and Retaliation Claims Against the Board

Lastly, the Board argues that with respect to the FCRA national origin discrimination claim, it is entitled to summary judgment because the claim is time-barred and, with respect to both the FCRA discrimination and retaliation claims, it is entitled to summary judgment because the claims are barred by the Eleventh Amendment. Alternatively, the Board contends that should these

arguments fail, the Court should decline to exercise supplemental jurisdiction of these claims. Barrios fails to offer any argument in opposition. Nevertheless, the undersigned will not reach the Board's arguments regarding the timeliness of the discrimination claim or the propriety of exercising supplemental jurisdiction because she is persuaded that the Eleventh Amendment bars these claims against the Board, an arm of the State of Florida. *See Biggs v. State of Florida Bd. of Regents*, 1998 WL 344349, *1 (N.D. Fla. June 11, 1998) (concluding that the Florida Board of Regents is a state entity).

The Eleventh Amendment provides that "[t]he Judicial Power of the United States shall not be construed to extend to any suit in law or equity, commenced or prosecuted against one of the United States by citizens of another State, or Citizens or Subjects of an Foreign State. The United States Supreme Court and the Eleventh Circuit have held that a state will be deemed to have waived its Eleventh Amendment immunity from suit only where stated by the most express language or by such overwhelming implication that there is no room for any other reasonable interpretation. *E.g., Port Auth. Trans-Hudson Corp. v. Feeney*, 495 U.S. 299, 305-06 (1990); *Lapides v. Board of Regents of the Univ. Sys. of Georgia*, 251 F.3d 1372, 1373 (11th Cir. 2001). After careful consideration of the language of the FCRA, the Court is unpersuaded that the Act provides, expressly or by implication, that the State of Florida has waived its immunity and consented to suit in federal court on claims brought under the Act. *See Biggs*, 1998 WL 344349 at *1-*2 (holding that the Eleventh Amendment bars FCRA claims against state agencies because the Florida Legislature has not waived immunity

and consented to be sued in federal court); *Williams v. State of Florida*, 2000 WL 799729, *2-*3 (N.D. Fla. June 10, 2000) (concluding that Eleventh Amendment immunity applies to claims under the FCRA against the State of Florida); *Haynes v. State of Florida*, 1998 WL 271462, *5 (S.D. Fla. Jan. 26, 1998) (granting summary judgment on plaintiff's FCRA claims against the Florida Dep't of Insurance based on the Eleventh Amendment); *Yeary v. State of Florida*, 1997 WL 284648, *2 (M.D. Fla. May 13, 1997) (granting summary judgment on plaintiff's FCRA claims against the Florida Dep't of Corrections based on the Eleventh Amendment). Accordingly, for the foregoing reasons, it is hereby

ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that Defendants' Motion for Final Summary Judgment is GRANTED.

DONE AND ORDERED in Chambers at Miami, Florida, this 9 day of July, 2001.

/s/ Ursula Ungaro-Benages
URSULA UNGARO-BENAGES
UNITED STATES DISTRICT
JUDGE

copies provided:
counsel of record

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

Case Number: 0-1995-CIV-UNGARO-BENAGES

PABLO BARRIOS,

Plaintiff,

vs.

FLORIDA BOARD OF REGENTS, et al.,

Defendants.

_____/

DECLARATION OF PABLO BARRIOS

I, PABLO BARRIOS, declare and state:

I, Pablo Barrios, was in the investigations unit of the F.I.U. Police Department for more than ten years. That unit worked most of the time from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Persons in that unit had Saturdays and Sundays off, unless a special investigation was being conducted. Officers who work in the investigations unit work out of an office, rather than a car, and wear plain clothes. Officers in the investigations unit get more money for their clothing allowance. Officers who work in the investigations unit work have as part of their job responsibility working, for example, to protect visiting dignitaries. Patrol officers deal with commoners. While in the investigations unit, I, Pablo Barrios, always had good evaluations for this work performance. After I, Pablo Barrios, obtained a grievance form in May of 1998, Ed Harris, a fellow employee of the F.I.U. Police Department, informed me that I would be transferred to the patrol unit, because I was pursuing a grievance against Director

Campbell. I, Pablo Barrios, was told by Harris that Campbell was the source of this statement. I, Pablo Barrios, was transferred to the patrol unit in July of 1998 within one month after having formally filed a grievance against Director Campbell for failure to promote him as a result of discrimination based on national origin. Before this transfer, Director Campbell knew that I had filed this grievance. This change in work assignment was a significant change, among other things, for the reason that I, Pablo Barrios, now had to rotate shifts, had to work on weekends, had to wear a uniform, and had to patrol in a police car.

One time after I filed my grievance, Captain Wright of the F.I.U. Police Department told me that Director Campbell told Wright that Campbell was giving Wright a bad evaluation because Wright filed a grievance against Campbell like I had done.

Prior to the opening of a Captain's position at the F.I.U. Police Department, I, Pablo Barrios, often complained to Director Campbell and Captain Cutliffe that Hispanics were not being fairly compensated for their work and were not being promoted to the higher ranks of the F.I.U. Police Department. In part based on these statements, as well as statements contained in the grievance, Director Campbell transferred me from the investigation unit to the patrol division as already stated above.

Pursuant to Title 28 United States Code section 1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Signed on May 18, 2001 in Miami-Dade County, Florida.

/s/ Pablo E. Barrios
PABLO BARRIOS

Supreme Court, U.S.
FILED
MAY 22 2002
OFFICE OF THE CLERK

No. 01-1560

In The
Supreme Court of the United States

PABLO E. BARRIOS,

Petitioner,

v.

THE FLORIDA BOARD OF REGENTS
and JESSE L. CAMPBELL, individually,

Respondents.

On Petition For A Writ Of Certiorari To The United States Court Of Appeals For The Eleventh Circuit

BRIEF IN OPPOSITION TO PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI

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QUESTION PRESENTED FOR REVIEW

In framing the questions presented for review here, Petitioner asserts that the reassignment to a different job involved "different conditions of employment". That is Petitioner's allegation and not the finding of the District Court. The District Court decision explains that Petitioner did not establish that his transfer altered the terms, conditions and privileges of employment. Respondents therefore find it necessary to restate here the questions presented by Petitioner neutrally, and combined as one, as follows:

1. Whether a transfer from the investigations unit to the patrol unit which requires the officer to sometimes work different hours and have different days off, to wear a uniform and decreased his clothing allowance, to sometimes work in the patrol car, and to work with "commoners" instead of dignitaries, but does not alter the officer's rank, compensation or benefits, sufficiently impacts the terms, conditions, or privileges of employment so as to constitute an adverse employment action to support a claim for retaliation against his employer and a claim of free speech retaliation against his supervisor?

PARTIES TO THE PROCEEDING AND STATEMENT PURSUANT TO RULE 29.6

The caption of the case contains the names of all the parties to this case. None of the parties to this case is a corporate entity. Therefore, there is no parent corporation, or publicly held company owning 10% or more of stock.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
QUESTION PRESENTED FOR REVIEW	i
PARTIES TO THE PROCEEDING AND STATEMENT PURSUANT TO RULE 29.6	ii
TABLE OF AUTHORITIES	v
OPINIONS BELOW	1
BASIS FOR JURISDICTION	1
STATEMENT OF THE CASE	1
A. District Court Decision Granting Summary Judgment	2
B. The Court of Appeals' Affirmance of the Summary Judgment	5
SUMMARY OF ARGUMENT	5
ARGUMENT	7
REASONS FOR DENYING THE WRIT	7
I. THE PETITION SHOULD BE DENIED BECAUSE THE ELEVENTH AND THIRD CIRCUITS ARE NOT CONFLICTED REGARDING THE STANDARD FOR EMPLOYER LIABILITY FOR RETALIATION	7
A. The District Court Used The Proper Framework To Analyze Retaliation Claims	8
B. The District Court's Decision And Reasoning Are Consistent With Summary Judgment Law And Not Conflicting With Any Case Law	11

TABLE OF CONTENTS – Continued

Page

C. The District Court's Decision Is Not In Conflict With The Third District's Decision In *Hampton* Or Other Third District Case Law 13

D. The District Court's Decision Is Not In Conflict With Other Federal Courts Of Appeals Decisions On The Issue In This Case 16

E. The District Court's Decision Is Consistent With This Court's Precedents 19

II. THIS CASE DOES NOT HAVE FAR-REACHING EMPLOYMENT LAW IMPLICATIONS 21

CONCLUSION 22

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

Page

CASES

Barrios v. Florida Board of Regents, 2002 U.S. App. LEXIS 5919 (11th Cir. 2002) 1

Benningfield v. City of Houston, 157 F.3d 369 (5th Cir. 1998), *cert. denied*, 526 U.S. 1065, 143 L. Ed. 2d 543, 119 S. Ct. 1457 (1999) 17

Burger v. Central Apartment Mgmt., Inc., 168 F.3d 875 (5th Cir. 1999) 17

Burlington Indus. Inc. v. Ellerth, 524 U.S. 742, 141 L. Ed. 2d 633, 118 S. Ct. 2257 (1998) 11, 20, 21

Cash v. Smith, 231 F.3d 1301 (11th Cir. 2000) 8

Caussade v. Brown, 924 F. Supp. 693 (D. Md. 1996), *aff'd*, 107 F.3d 865 (4th Cir. 1997) 18

Clark County Sch. Dist. v. Breeden, 532 U.S. 268, 149 L. Ed. 2d 509, 121 S. Ct. 1508 (2001) 20

Coffman v. Tracker Marine, LP, 141 F.3d 1241 (8th Cir. 1998) 10

Collins v. State of Illinois, 830 F.2d 692 (7th Cir. 1987) 18

Commissioner v. Bilder, 369 U.S. 499, 8 L. Ed. 2d 65, 82 S. Ct. 881 (1962) 8

Crady v. Liberty Nat'l Bank & Trust Co., 993 F.2d 132 (7th Cir. 1993) 18

Davis v. Town of Lake Park, Florida, 245 F.3d 1232 (11th Cir. 2001) 3, 12, 14, 21

de la Cruz v. New York City Human Resources Admin. Dep't of Social Servs., 82 F.3d 16 (2d Cir. 1996) 18

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES – Continued

Page

Doe v. Dekalb County Sch. Dist., 145 F.3d 1441 (11th Cir. 1998) 16, 17

Durley v. APAC, 236 F.3d 651 (11th Cir. 2000) 8

Goldlawr, Inc. v. Heiman, 369 U.S. 463, 8 L. Ed. 2d 39, 82 S. Ct. 913 (1962) 8

Hampton v. Borough of Tinton Falls Police Dept., 98 F.3d 107 (3d Cir. 1996) 5, 7, 14

In re: Woods, 143 U.S. 202, 36 L. Ed. 125, 12 S. Ct. 417 (1892) 1

International Brotherhood of Teamsters v. United States, 431 U.S. 324, 52 L. Ed. 2d 396, 97 S. Ct. 1843 (1977) 10

Johnson v. United States Dep't of Health & Human Services, 30 F.3d 45 (6th Cir. 1994) 10

Knox v. Indiana, 93 F.3d 1327 (7th Cir. 1996) 10

Kocsis v. Multi-Care Management, Inc., 97 F.3d 876 (6th Cir. 1996) 17

Layne & Bowler Corp. v. Western Well Works, Inc., 261 U.S. 387, 67 L. Ed. 712, 43 S. Ct. 422 (1923) 7

Ledergerber v. Stangler, 122 F.3d 1142 (8th Cir. 1997) 17

Local Union No. 189, Amalgamated Meat Cutters & Butcher Workmen v. Jewel Tea Co., 381 U.S. 676 (1965), *superseded by statute as stated in, Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees v. Guilford Transp. Industries, Inc.*, 803 F.2d 1228 (1st Cir. 1986) 6, 7, 19, 20

Magnum Import Co. v. Coty, 262 U.S. 159, 67 L. Ed. 922, 43 S. Ct. 531 (1923) 22

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES – Continued

Page

McDonnell Douglas Corp. v. Green, 411 U.S. 792 (1973) 10

McNairn v. Sullivan, 929 F.2d 974 (4th Cir. 1991) 10

Merriweather v. Alabama Dept. of Public Safety, 17 F. Supp. 2d 1260 (M. D. Ala. 1998) 13

Messer v. Meno, 130 F.3d 130 (5th Cir. 1997) 10

Nelson v. Upsala Coll., 51 F.3d 383 (3d Cir. 1995) 15

Oncale v. Sundowner Offshore Services, Inc., 523 U.S. 75, 140 L. Ed. 2d 201, 118 S. Ct. 998 (1998) 20

Passer v. American Chemical Society, 935 F.2d 322 (D.C. Cir. 1991) 10

Quinn v. Green Tree Credit Corp., 159 F.3d 759 (2d Cir. 1998) 10

Raney v. Vinson Guard Serv., Inc., 120 F.3d 1192 (11th Cir. 1997) 8

Rice v. Sioux City Memorial Park Cemetery, Inc., 349 U.S. 70, 99 L. Ed. 897, 75 S. Ct. 614 (1955) 7

Robinson v. City of Pittsburgh, 120 F.3d 1286 (3d Cir. 1997) 10, 14, 15, 16

Sanchez v. Denver Pub. Schs., 164 F.3d 527 (10th Cir. 1998) 17

Sauers v. Salt Lake County, 1 F.3d 1122 (10th Cir 1993), *limited by, Harrison v. Eddy Potash, Inc.*, 112 F.3d 1437 (10th Cir. 1997) 10

St. Mary's Honor Ctr. v. Hicks, 509 U.S. 502, 125 L. Ed. 2d 407, 113 S. Ct. 2742 (1993) 10

Steiner v. Showboat Operating Co., 25 F.3d 1459 (9th Cir. 1994) 17

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES – Continued

Page

Strother v. Southern California Permanente Medical Group, 79 F.3d 859 (9th Cir. 1996) 10

Suarez v. Pueblo Int'l, Inc., 229 F.3d 49 (1st Cir. 2000) 16

Torre v. Casio, Inc., 42 F.3d 825 (3d Cir. 1994) 16, 18, 19

Wideman v. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., 141 F.3d 1453 (11th Cir. 1998) 10

Williams v. Bristol-Myers Squibb Co., 85 F.3d 270 (7th Cir. 1996) 11, 16

Wisconsin Electric Co. v. Dumore Co., 282 U.S. 813, 75 L. Ed. 728, 51 S. Ct. 214 (1931) 8

Wolf v. Coca-Cola, 200 F.3d 1337 (11th Cir. 2000) 8

Wyatt v. City of Boston, 35 F.3d 13 (1st Cir. 1994) 10

OTHER AUTHORITIES

28 U.S.C. §1254(1) 1

29 U.S.C. §623 21

42 U.S.C. §1983 2

42 U.S.C. §2000e 2

42 U.S.C. §2000e-2(a) 9, 16, 20

42 U.S.C. §2000e-3(a) 9

42 U.S.C. §12203 21

First Amendment, United States Constitution 4, 5

Supreme Court Rule 10 1

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ..... *passim*

OPINIONS BELOW

The opinion of the court of appeals in *Barrios v. Florida Board of Regents* issued on January 16, 2002 is an unpublished decision affirming the District Court decision. *Barrios v. Florida Board of Regents*, 2002 U.S. App. LEXIS 5919 (11th Cir. 2002). [Pet. App. 1].[1] The opinion and order of the District Court are unreported. [Pet. App. 2-20].

BASIS FOR JURISDICTION

This Court may only exercise discretionary jurisdiction over a decision of a circuit court of appeals that conflicts with the decision of another circuit court of appeals on the same important matter, that decides an important question of federal law that has not been, but should be, settled by this Court, or that decides an important federal question in a way that conflicts with relevant decisions of this Court. 28 U.S.C. §1254(1); Supreme Court Rule 10. Additionally, this Court can decline to exercise its jurisdiction in cases that are not sufficiently important to warrant review. *In re: Woods*, 143 U.S. 202, 36 L. Ed. 125, 12 S. Ct. 417 (1892).

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

Petitioner seeks review of an unpublished Florida court of appeals decision, which affirmed the trial court's

[1] "Pet. App." refers to the Appendix filed by the Petitioner with his Petition for Writ of Certiorari and will be followed by the appropriate page number of the document.

decision granting summary judgment in favor of the Florida Board of Regents ("Board of Regents") on his claim of retaliation pursuant to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Civil Rights Act of 1991, 42 U.S.C. §2000e, *et seq*. ("Title VII") and in favor of Chief Jesse L. Campbell on his free speech retaliation claim pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §1983. Petitioner does not seek review of the portions of the District Court decision granting of summary judgment on his other claims. [Petition p. 3, 9, 11].

A. District Court Decision Granting Summary Judgment.

In his brief, Petitioner fails to present this Court with several facts considered by the District Court in determining whether Petitioner suffered an adverse employment action. Petitioner relies solely on the job transfer. In fact, Petitioner states that he will ignore the additional facts referred to by the District Court. [Petition p. 5]. The full analysis of the District Court is important.

On July 11, 2001, the District Court granted the motion for summary judgment on all counts. [Pet. App. 2-20]. In support of his argument that he suffered an adverse employment action, Petitioner relied on his transfer from the investigations unit to the patrol unit. The District Court reviewed the record and found that Petitioner was subjected to the following conduct as a result of the filing of the internal grievance in June 1998 and the EEOC complaints on May 27, 1999 and April 22, 2000: July 1998 transfer to the patrol unit; threats that he would lose the assistance of other officers in completing his investigative work; being called "old" and a "fat ass";

being subjected to inspections of his work; being questioned by Campbell about his grievance; and two internal affairs investigations. [*Id.* at 5, 10].

The District Court then analyzed each of these conducts in light of the standards enunciated in *Davis v. Town of Lake Park, Florida*, 245 F.3d 1232, 1239 (11th Cir. 2001) (employment action must objectively, not subjectively, "impact the 'terms conditions, or privileges' of the plaintiff's job in a real and demonstrable way" and have "at least a tangible adverse effect on the plaintiff's employment" to constitute an adverse action). [Pet. App. 10-11]. After applying these standards, the court determined that only two of the actions taken against Petitioner, the two internal affairs investigations and the transfer to the patrol unit, warranted further analysis. [*Id.* at 11].

With respect to the two internal affairs investigations, the court found that the record was devoid of any evidence that the investigations or their findings that the charges were "not sustained" had any impact on Petitioner's employment. [*Id.* at 11]. Moreover, the investigations were not initiated by any person with knowledge of the internal grievance or charges of discrimination. [*Id.* at 12].

With respect to the 1998 transfer, the court reviewed Petitioner's declaration. [Pet. App. 12-13, 21-23]. Petitioner asserted that the transfer required him to work rotating shifts, which included weekends rather than working mostly Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; required him to wear a uniform rather than plain clothes; required him to work out of a patrol car rather than an office; required him to work with commoners rather than with dignitaries; and decreased his clothing allowance. [*Id.* at 12-13, 21]. However, the court concluded

that none of these circumstances, viewed individually or collectively, constitute a serious or material change in the terms or conditions of Petitioner's employment. [*Id.* at 13]. In fact, Petitioner did not establish that the transfer resulted in any tangible change to his compensation, benefits, rank or job duties. [*Id.*]. Petitioner failed to present evidence sufficient to establish that the change in his schedule may have altered the "terms, conditions, or privileges" of his employment. [*Id.*]. There was no evidence of a demotion or increased work hours. [*Id.*]. Thus, the District Court found that Petitioner failed to establish that any adverse employment action was taken in retaliation for his filing of the internal grievance or the EEOC charges. [*Id.* at 10, 13-14].

Additionally, the district found that Petitioner failed to demonstrate that he was retaliated against for exercising his First Amendment Rights. [*Id.* at 16]. First, the court pointed out that in support of his argument that he was denied his right to speak to his friends about matters that were purely personal to Petitioner. [*Id.* at 15]. Additionally, the court noted that, although not referred to by Petitioner himself, the record does contain evidence that Petitioner complained that Hispanic officers were not paid adequately for the work they performed and that Hispanics were not being promoted to the higher ranks. [*Id.* at 15].

In support of the retaliation for these complaints, Petitioner relied upon his transfer to the patrol unit. [*Id.* at 15-16]. The court found that Petitioner failed to establish an adverse employment action, an essential element to establish a First Amendment retaliation claim. [*Id.* at 16]. Accordingly, Petitioner failed to establish that he was

retaliated against for exercising his First Amendment rights.

B. The Court of Appeals' Affirmance of the Summary Judgment.

On January 16, 2002, the Eleventh Circuit issued its decision affirming the order granting the summary judgment motion for the reasons set forth in the District Court's order. [Pet. App. 1].

SUMMARY OF ARGUMENT

Petitioner's Writ of Certiorari should be denied. This case is not suitable for further review for several reasons. The District Court applied the appropriate standard for what constitutes an adverse employment action under Title VII's retaliation provision and for reviewing summary judgment motions. In fact, the propriety of the elements to establish a claim of retaliation are not before this Court. In this case, the germane facts are not in dispute. The court did not decide any factual issues. Petitioner did not create any issue of fact. He simply produced insufficient evidence to establish that he suffered an adverse employment action as a result of his transfer.

Next, there is no true conflict between the Third Circuit's decision in *Hampton v. Borough of Tinton Falls Police Dept.*, 98 F.3d 107 (3d Cir. 1996) and the Eleventh Circuit's decision. The law in the Eleventh and Third Circuit Courts of Appeals is consistent. The asserted conflict in the appellate decisions arose from differences in presentation of facts, and not in the application of a principle of law. In *Hampton*, the Third Circuit simply

reversed the summary judgment entered against the defendants on the disparate treatment and retaliation claims finding that the facts presented by the plaintiff created a jury question.

Further, the District Court's decision is not in conflict with other federal court of appeals decisions on the issue in this case. The law is clear, that a transfer, even without loss of pay or benefits, may, in some circumstances, constitute an adverse job action. In Petitioner's case, however, he failed to establish the existence of a material fact regarding whether he suffered an adverse change in the terms and conditions of his employment. Since Petitioner was unable to establish the second element of the prima facie case of retaliation, the Court properly granted Respondents' Motions For Summary Judgment.

Moreover, the District Court's decision is consistent with this Court's rulings regarding Title VII retaliation claims. Petitioner argues that the District Court's decision appears to conflict with this Court's decision in *Local Union No. 189, Amalgamated Meat Cutters & Butcher Workmen v. Jewel Tea Co.*, 381 U.S. 676 (1965), *superseded by statute as stated in, Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees v. Guilford Transp. Industries, Inc.*, 803 F.2d 1228 (1st Cir. 1986). However, that case addresses different issues from the case at bar. Therefore, Petitioner's reliance on that case is misplaced.

Finally, this case does not have far-reaching employment law implications. There is nothing unique about the District Court's review of the evidence presented by Petitioner. Thus, the question presented by this case is of importance only to the litigants and does not present an

issue of immediate public significance. Thus, this Court should deny Petitioner's request for a writ of certiorari.

ARGUMENT

REASONS FOR DENYING THE WRIT

Petitioner argues that the District Court's decision directly conflicts with the decision of the Third Circuit in *Hampton v. Borough of Tinton Falls Police Dept.*, 98 F.3d at 107 and with the reasoning of this Court in *Local Union No. 189, Amalgamated Meat Cutters & Butcher Workmen v. Jewel Tea Co.*, 381 U.S. at 691. Both contentions are incorrect.

I.

THE PETITION SHOULD BE DENIED BECAUSE THE ELEVENTH AND THIRD CIRCUITS ARE NOT CONFLICTED REGARDING THE STANDARD FOR EMPLOYER LIABILITY FOR RETALIATION.

This Court should leave undisturbed, by denying certiorari, decisions of Courts of Appeals involving solely a fair assessment of a record on the issue of adversity and materiality of the employment conditions alleged. This Court has stated that it will not grant the writ of certiorari except in cases involving principles, the settlement of which is of importance to the public as distinguished from that of the parties, and in cases where there is a real and embarrassing conflict of opinion and authority between the circuit courts of appeal. *Layne & Bowler Corp. v. Western Well Works, Inc.*, 261 U.S. 387, 393, 67 L. Ed. 712, 43 S. Ct. 422 (1923); *Rice v. Sioux City Memorial Park*

Cemetery, Inc., 349 U.S. 70, 99 L. Ed. 897, 75 S. Ct. 614 (1955).

This Court should only grant certiorari to review decisions of the United States Court of Appeals where the decision presents conflict with the uniform course of decisions previously made on the same question by other Courts of Appeals, *Goldlawr, Inc. v. Heiman*, 369 U.S. 463, 8 L. Ed. 2d 39, 82 S. Ct. 913 (1962), and to review the judgment of United States Court of Appeals where it is contrary to a decision of the Court of Appeals for another circuit, and there is a need for uniform rule on this point. *Commissioner v. Bilder*, 369 U.S. 499, 8 L. Ed. 2d 65, 82 S. Ct. 881 (1962). Neither of these circumstances is present in the instant case. Petitioner's writ of certiorari should be denied where asserted conflict in decisions arose from "differences in states of fact, and not in the application of a principle of law." *Wisconsin Electric Co. v. Dumore Co.*, 282 U.S. 813, 75 L. Ed. 728, 51 S. Ct. 214 (1931).

A. The District Court Used The Proper Framework To Analyze Retaliation Claims.

Although the general framework under which Petitioner's claim of retaliation was evaluated is not in dispute,[2] Petitioner disagrees with the District Court's

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[2] The general framework for proving a case of retaliation under Title VII, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and similar federal statutes has long been settled. *Raney v. Vinson Guard Serv., Inc.*, 120 F.3d 1192, 1196 (11th Cir. 1997); *Durley v. APAC*, 236 F.3d 651 (11th Cir. 2000) (applying same test to ADA claim); *Cash v. Smith*, 231 F.3d 1301 (11th Cir. 2000) (applying same test to Family and Medical Leave Act); *Wolf v. Coca-Cola*, 200 F.3d 1337 (11th Cir. 2000) (applying same test to Fair Labor Standards Act).

decision of what constitutes an adverse employment action sufficient to establish the second prong of the plaintiff's prima facie case. Petitioner also seems to be questioning the origin of the "adverse employment action" requirement. [Petition pp. 9-10].

Although the term "adverse employment action" is not contained in the language of the statute or the regulations,[3] all circuits require that to establish a prima facie case of retaliation an employee must establish that he or she has engaged in protected activity, suffered an adverse employment action, and established a causal link between the protected activity and the adverse employment action.

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[3] Section 703(a) of Title VII provides:

> It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer – (1) to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; or (2) to limit, segregate, or classify his employees . . . in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his status as an employee, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

42 U.S.C. §2000e-2(a).

Section 704(a) of Title VII provides protection against retaliation for two groups of employees: (1) those opposing discrimination proscribed by Title VII and (2) those participating in Title VII processes:

> It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer to discriminate against any of his employees or applicants . . . because he has opposed any practice made an unlawful employment practice by this subchapter, or because he has made a charge, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under this subchapter.

42 U.S.C. §2000e-3(a).

Wyatt v. City of Boston, 35 F.3d 13, 15 (1st Cir. 1994); *Quinn v. Green Tree Credit Corp.*, 159 F.3d 759, 760 (2d Cir. 1998); *Robinson v. City of Pittsburgh*, 120 F.3d 1286, 1299 (3d Cir. 1997); *McNairn v. Sullivan*, 929 F.2d 974, 980 (4th Cir. 1991); *Messer v. Meno*, 130 F.3d 130, 140 (5th Cir. 1997); *Johnson v. United States Dep't of Health & Human Services*, 30 F.3d 45, 47 (6th Cir. 1994); *Knox v. Indiana*, 93 F.3d 1327, 1333 (7th Cir. 1996); *Coffman v. Tracker Marine, LP*, 141 F.3d 1241, 1245 (8th Cir. 1998); *Strother v. Southern California Permanente Medical Group*, 79 F.3d 859, 868 (9th Cir. 1996); *Sauers v. Salt Lake County*, 1 F.3d 1122, 1128 (10th Cir 1993), *limited by*, *Harrison v. Eldy Potash, Inc.*, 112 F.3d 1437 (10th Cir. 1997); *Wideman v. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.*, 141 F.3d 1453, 1454 (11th Cir. 1998); *Passer v. American Chemical Society*, 935 F.2d 322, 331 (D.C. Cir. 1991). That standard is well entrenched in the case law and stems from the analysis first articulated by this Court in *McDonnell Douglas Corp. v. Green*, 411 U.S. 792, 802-05 (1973) ("The complainant ... must carry the initial burden by showing ... (iii) that, despite his qualifications, he was rejected. . . . "); *see also St. Mary's Honor Ctr. v. Hicks*, 509 U.S. 502, 523-24, 125 L. Ed. 2d 407, 113 S. Ct. 2742 (1993) ("Title VII does not award damages against employers who cannot prove a nondiscriminatory reason for adverse employment action, but only against employers who are proven to have taken adverse employment action."); *International Brotherhood of Teamsters v. United States*, 431 U.S. 324, 358, 52 L. Ed. 2d 396, 97 S. Ct. 1843 (1977) ("The importance of *McDonnell Douglas* lies, not in its specification of the discrete elements of proof there required, but in its recognition of the general principle that any Title VII plaintiff must carry the initial burden of offering evidence adequate to create an inference that an

employment decision was based on a discriminatory criterion illegal under the Act.").

Moreover, this Court has defined an adverse employment action as one which "constitutes a significant change in employment status, such as hiring, firing, failing to promote, reassignment with significantly different responsibilities, or a decision causing a significant change in benefits." *Burlington Indus. Inc. v. Ellerth*, 524 U.S. 742, 761, 141 L. Ed. 2d 633, 118 S. Ct. 2257 (1998). Therefore, based on this Court's definition of the term, extensive precedent, and, in light of Petitioner's failure to object to the elements analyzed by the District Court, the propriety of the elements to establish a claim of retaliation are not before this Court.

B. The District Court's Decision And Reasoning Are Consistent With Summary Judgment Law And Not Conflicting With Any Case Law.

In this case, the germane facts are not in dispute. The District Court used the correct summary judgment standard. The record did not present any factual issues. The court did not decide any factual issues. Petitioner simply produced insufficient evidence to establish that he suffered an adverse employment action as a result of his transfer. Because the question of adversity was properly resolved on summary judgment in this case because the question was not fairly contestable. *See Williams v. Bristol-Myers Squibb Co.*, 85 F.3d 270, 273-74 (7th Cir. 1996).

The District Court applied the appropriate standard for what constitutes an adverse employment action under Title VII's retaliation provision. The court reviewed the actions to determine whether those actions affected the

terms and conditions of Petitioner's employment. The standard is consistent with the textual mandates of the retaliation provision and the case law interpreting the requirement. This standard allows flexibility to adapt to different factual situations and those facts are analyzed on a case by case basis.

The District Court in this case found that Petitioner had failed to offer any evidence that his July 1998 transfer to the patrol unit affected the "terms, conditions, or benefits"[4] of his employment and granted summary judgment on Petitioner's retaliation claims. [Pet. App. 13-14, 16]. The District Court followed well-established, and unchallenged, case law setting forth the summary judgment standard. [*Id.* at 7-8].

The record reveals that Petitioner failed to make any showing at all that his transfer to the new position was an adverse employment action, other than advancing his own subjective views on the subject. *Davis v. Town of Lake Park*, 245 F.3d at 1239 (plaintiff's subjective view of the significance and adversity of the action is irrelevant). Petitioner did not dispute that the transfer did not change his job duties, rank, compensation or benefits. [*Id.* at 13]. Petitioner did not establish that the reassignment changed the location of his job. Petitioner did not present any evidence that his clothing allowance as a patrol officer was different than his clothing allowance as an investigator. [*Id.*]. Petitioner presented no evidence that the transfer was a demotion or that it required him to work more hours for the same amount of pay. [*Id.*]. In summary, Petitioner

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[4] Title VII bans discrimination in "terms, conditions, or privileges of employment."

failed to articulate how his transfer actions cause a change to the terms, conditions or privileges of his employment.

An adverse employment action is an indispensable element of a Title VII claim. Because Petitioner bore the burden of proof, it was incumbent on him to present some evidence showing why the transfer was adverse to him. Without some demonstration that there was a contestable issue of material fact in this regard, the trial court did not err in finding, as a matter of law, that Petitioner's retaliation claims must fail with regard to the transfer. Because Petitioner failed to produce any objective evidence that his transfer was an adverse employment action, he did not establish that a material issue of fact existed that would warrant a trial of his retaliation claims with regard to that transfer. Therefore, the District Court properly granted summary disposition to the Board of Regents on the Title VII claim for retaliation.

Without any adverse employment action, Petitioner cannot establish a First Amendment retaliation claim against Campbell under section 1983. *See, e.g., Merriweather v. Alabama Dept. of Public Safety*, 17 F. Supp. 2d 1260, 1279 (M. D. Ala. 1998). Therefore, for the same reasons as discussed above, the District Court properly concluded that Petitioner had failed to establish a freedom of speech retaliation claim against Campbell.

C. The District Court's Decision Is Not In Conflict with Third District's Decision In *Hampton* Or Other Third District Case Law.

Petitioner relies on one case from the Third District to argue that the District Court's decision conflicts with the decisional law of the Third District.

In *Hampton*, the Third Circuit simply reversed the summary judgment entered against the defendants on the disparate treatment and retaliation claims finding that the facts presented by the plaintiff created a jury question. 98 F.3d at 116. The court found that the "district court either ignored several discrepancies in the evaluation process, or failed to give all reasonable inferences arising therefrom [to the plaintiff]" with regard to the disparate impact claim. *Id.* at 113-15. With regard to the retaliation claim, the Third Circuit left for the jury questions whether defendant's "reassignment" of plaintiff was in fact a "transfer" or a "demotion" and whether the move was an "adverse employment decision." *Id.* The court did not discuss what the plaintiff must do to show that an employment action was adverse. *Id.* In light of the District Court's analysis in this case and the lack of any analysis in the *Hampton* case, there is no conflict between the decisions.

Moreover, the law in the Third Circuit is consistent with the law in the Eleventh Circuit. In the Third Circuit, as in the Eleventh Circuit, retaliatory conduct constitutes "adverse employment action" under Title VII only if it "alters the employee's 'compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment,' deprives him or her of 'employment opportunities,' or 'adversely affect[s] his [or her] status as an employee.'" *See Robinson v. City of Pittsburgh*, 120 F.3d 1286, 1300 (3d Cir. 1997); *see also Davis v. Town of Lake Park*, 245 F.3d at 1239-40, 1245. Both Circuits hold that a transfer or reassignment may satisfy the "adverse action" element of a retaliation claim. But more is needed than a bare allegation of a transfer or reassignment.

Both circuits require a material adverse change to the working conditions to constitute retaliation. The hird Circuit has incorporated the prevailing standard for discriminatory practices into the retaliation context, ruling that an employer reprisal must be "materially adverse" before it can give rise to a Title VII claim. *See Robinson v. City of Pittsburgh*, 120 F.3d at 1300-01. In the Third Circuit, the "retaliatory conduct must be serious and tangible enough to alter an employee's compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment." *Id.* at 1300. Further, as stated in *Nelson v. Upsala Coll.*, 51 F.3d 383, 389 (3d Cir. 1995), to overcome a summary judgment an employee must allege an adverse action that has an "impact on any employment relationship that [the employee] had, or might have in the future."

In *Robinson v. City of Pittsburgh*, the plaintiff alleged that she was subjected to the following acts of reprisal due to the filing of her EEOC complaint: restricted job duties, reassignment and subsequent failure to transfer her out of an assignment in which she was under the direct command of the alleged harasser, and the issuance of several unsubstantiated oral reprimands against her. 120 F.3d at 1300. The court found that this conduct did not give rise to a claim of retaliation. *Id.* The court reasoned that the actions described did not amount to "adverse employment action." *Id.* The conduct did not alter Plaintiff's "compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment," deprives him or her of "employment opportunities," or "adversely affects his [or her] status as an employee." *Id.* The court held that the "adverse employment action" element of a retaliation plaintiff's prima facie case incorporates the same requirement that the retaliatory conduct

rise to the level of a violation of 42 U.S.C. §2000e-2(a)(1) or (2). *Id.* at 1300-01.

The fact that the Eleventh Circuit in *Doe v. Dekalb County Sch. Dist.*, 145 F.3d 1441, 1452 (11th Cir. 1998) cited to the Third Circuit's decision in *Torre v. Casio, Inc.*, 42 F.3d 825, 831 n.7 (3d Cir. 1994) as an example of a case where the plaintiff had created a material fact issue concerning whether his transfer was a discriminatory scheme indicates the similarity between the circuits. Both circuits have found that "not everything that makes an employee unhappy" qualifies as retaliation, for "otherwise, minor and even trivial employment actions that 'an irritable, chip-on-the-shoulder employee did not like would form the basis of a discrimination suit.'" *Robinson v. City of Pittsburgh*, 120 F.3d at 1300 and *Doe v. Dekalb County Sch. Dist.*, 145 F.3d at 1449 (quoting *Williams v. Bristol-Myers Squibb Co.*, 85 F.3d at 274).

D. The District Court's Decision Is Not In Conflict With Other Federal Courts Of Appeals Decisions On The Issue In This Case.

Courts have generally found an adverse employment action only when the circumstances involve a greater relative difference between the positions in question than that involved in this case.[5] *See, e.g., Suarez v. Pueblo Int'l, Inc.*, 229 F.3d 49 (1st Cir. 2000) (summary judgment affirmed because plaintiff could not demonstrate an adverse employment action that was taken against him

[5] These retaliation cases are not directly on point, but nevertheless are suggestive as to the circumstances under which a lateral transfer would be considered an adverse employment action.

sufficient to support a claim of constructive discharge, and he thus failed to meet the adverse employment action prong of age discrimination; superior made structural changes that affected plaintiff's job, but not his salary or rank); *Burger v. Central Apartment Mgmt., Inc.*, 168 F.3d 875, 879-80 (5th Cir. 1999) (Title VII retaliation; same job title, benefits, duties, and responsibilities; longer commute was insufficient to make transfer adverse, as was transfer to "a less secure (but otherwise similar) position"; also noting "the clear trend of authority in other circuits holding that a purely lateral transfer is not an adverse employment action") (internal quotation marks and citations omitted); *Sanchez v. Denver Pub. Schs.*, 164 F.3d 527, 532 (10th Cir. 1998) (involuntary lateral transfer, without more, does not constitute an "adverse employment action" where the transfer merely increased the employee's commute and did not alter her salary, benefits, or elementary school teaching responsibilities); *Benningfield v. City of Houston*, 157 F.3d 369, 377 (5th Cir. 1998) (§1983 retaliation; transfer to night shift; "Merely changing Benningfield's hours, without more, does not constitute an adverse employment action. A transfer may also constitute a demotion.") (citations omitted), *cert. denied*, 526 U.S. 1065, 143 L. Ed. 2d 543, 119 S. Ct. 1457 (1999); *Doe v. Dekalb County Sch. Dist.*, 145 F.3d at 1450 ("[T]he clear trend of authority" in other circuits holding that "a purely lateral transfer is not an adverse employment action."); *Ledergerber v. Stangler*, 122 F.3d 1142, 1144 (8th Cir. 1997) (finding that transfer was not a demotion; transfer had same salary, benefits, seniority, and relative level of prestige); *Kocsis v. Multi-Care Management, Inc.*, 97 F.3d 876, 886 (6th Cir. 1996) (transfer that did not entail a loss of pay, benefits, duties, or prestige was not adverse action); *Steiner v. Showboat Operating Co.*, 25 F.3d 1459, 1465 n.6

(9th Cir. 1994) (where employee "was not demoted or put in a worse job or given any additional responsibilities" it was questionable whether he had suffered an "adverse employment action."); *Crady v. Liberty Nat'l Bank & Trust Co.*, 993 F.2d 132, 136 (7th Cir. 1993) (holding that a mere change in job responsibilities without a concomitant loss of salary or benefits was not an adverse employment action under the ADEA); *Collins v. State of Illinois*, 830 F.2d 692, 704 (7th Cir. 1987) (Title VII retaliation; "relegated to doing reference work instead of consulting"; no longer had private office, own phone, business cards, or listing in professional publications); *Caussade v. Brown*, 924 F. Supp. 693, 700 (D. Md. 1996), *aff'd*, 107 F.3d 865 (4th Cir. 1997) (unpublished table opinion) (finding no adverse employment action where a nurse was reassigned to a different ward with similar duties and responsibilities and same title, grade, salary and benefits).

However, where the transfer is not purely lateral, that is, where the transfer is objectively equivalent to a demotion, courts in other circuits have recognized the transfer as an adverse action. *See de la Cruz v. New York City Human Resources Admin. Dep't of Social Servs.*, 82 F.3d 16, 21 (2d Cir. 1996) (transfer to a less prestigious job with little opportunity for professional growth arguably altered the terms and conditions of employment and was an adverse employment action in a Title VII discrimination action); *Torre v. Casio, Inc.*, 42 F.3d at 831 n.7 (allegation of transfer to dead-end job sufficient to create material fact issue of adverse employment action).

The law is clear, that a transfer, even without loss of pay or benefits, may, in some circumstances, constitute an adverse job action. *See Collins v. State of Illinois*, 830 F.2d

at 702-04 & 702 n.7 (collecting cases). But the employee challenging the action must create a material fact issue concerning his transfer and the impact of that transfer. *Torre v. Casio, Inc.*, 42 F.3d at 825. Thus, any cases finding a reassignment is an adverse employment action rely on their own facts. Facts not present in the instant case. In Petitioner's case, he failed to establish the existence of a material fact. Thus, summary judgment was properly granted.

E. The District Court's Decision Is Consistent With This Court's Precedents.

Petitioner argues that the District Court's decision appears to conflict with this Court's decision in *Local Union No. 189, Amalgamated Meat Cutters & Butcher Workmen v. Jewel Tea Co.*, 381 U.S. at 676. However, that case is easily distinguishable on its facts and on the law reviewed. That case addresses different issues from the case at bar. Therefore, Petitioner's reliance on that case is misplaced.

In that case, the Meatcutters' and Butchers' Union sought to prevent any store in the Chicago area from selling meat except during the hours of 9:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. *Id.* at 680. All members of a bargaining association of stores acceded to the union's demand except Jewel Tea Co., which held out. *Id.* The union called a strike against it which thereby forced Jewel Tea to acquiesce. *Id.* at 681. On Jewel Tea's suit to void this condition in its contract with the union, the district court held that there was no evidence of a conspiracy between the union and the retailers' association to impose the restricted marketing hours on the company. *Id.* at 682-83.

This Court reviewed two issues, to wit: (1) whether the limitation upon market operating hours are within the labor exemption of the Sherman Antitrust Act; and (2) whether a claimed violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act falls within the regulatory scope of the National Labor Relations Act. *Id.* at 684. In reviewing the terms of the union agreement, this Court reasoned that "the particular hours of the day and the particular days of the week during which employees shall be required to work are subjects well within the realm of 'wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment' *about which employers and unions must bargain*" and, thus, within the scope of the National Labor Relations Act. *Id.* at 691 (emphasis added). Although dealing with working hours, the reasoning of the *Local Union No. 189* case is irrelevant to the facts and issues presented in the instant case.

This Court's treatment given to retaliation claims is consistent with the treatment given to the Petitioner's case by the District Court and the Eleventh Circuit. Therefore, there is no conflict between the District Court decision in the instant case and this Court's precedents.

There is no question that Title VII forbids actions taken that "discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment." *Clark County Sch. Dist. v. Breeden*, 532 U.S. 268, 270, 149 L. Ed. 2d 509, 121 S. Ct. 1508 (2001) (quoting 42 U.S.C. §2000e-2(a)(1)). But Title VII "forbids only behavior so *objectively offensive* as to alter the 'conditions' of the victim's employment". *Oncale v. Sundowner Offshore Services, Inc.*, 523 U.S. 75, 81, 140 L. Ed. 2d 201, 118 S. Ct. 998 (1998) (emphasis added); *see also Burlington Industries, Inc. v. Ellerth*, 524 U.S. at 752 (1998) (finding that only harassing conduct that is "severe

or pervasive" can produce a "constructive alteration in the terms or conditions of employment"). The District Court reviewed the employment actions using the proper objective standard. [Pet. App. 13-14 citing *Davis v. Town of Lake Park*, 245 F.3d at 1245].

Moreover, the District Court applied the correct standard to determine whether the reassignment constituted an adverse or tangible employment action. [Pet. App. 13-14]. "A tangible employment action constitutes a significant change in employment status, such as hiring, firing, failing to promote, *reassignment with significantly different responsibilities*, or a decision causing a significant change in benefits." *Burlington Indus. v. Ellerth*, 524 U.S. at 761 (emphasis added). A tangible employment action in most cases inflicts direct economic harm. *Id.* at 762. The District Court analyzed the evidence presented by Petitioner and properly concluded that the reassignment did not significantly change his responsibilities and did not change his benefits at all. [Pet. App. 12-14].

II.

THIS CASE DOES NOT HAVE FAR-REACHING EMPLOYMENT LAW IMPLICATIONS

Petitioner also argues that the decision in this case presents an issue of national importance that will have a far-reaching impact on decisions interpreting the requirements of Title VII, and other statutes such as the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, 29 U.S.C. §623, Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §12203, and other statutory causes of action containing an "adverse employment action" requirement. [Petition p. 12].

Petitioner overstates the significance of the ruling in his case with regard to employment law.

This is a case that addresses issues that are important to Petitioner himself. But this Court does not exist for the benefit of particular litigants. *Magnum Import Co. v. Coty*, 262 U.S. 159, 163, 67 L. Ed. 922, 43 S. Ct. 531 (1923).

After considering the facts presented by Petitioner and the applicable case law, the District Court properly held that Petitioner had failed to present sufficient evidence that he was subjected to any adverse employment action in retaliation for protected conduct. This ruling was in accordance with summary judgment case law and employment case law. The courts properly applied the basic summary judgment standard and considered all evidence presented by Petitioner. This case raises no significant issue of employment law that warrants this Court's sound judicial discretionary review.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, respondents respectfully request that this Court deny Petitioner's writ.

Respectfully submitted,

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